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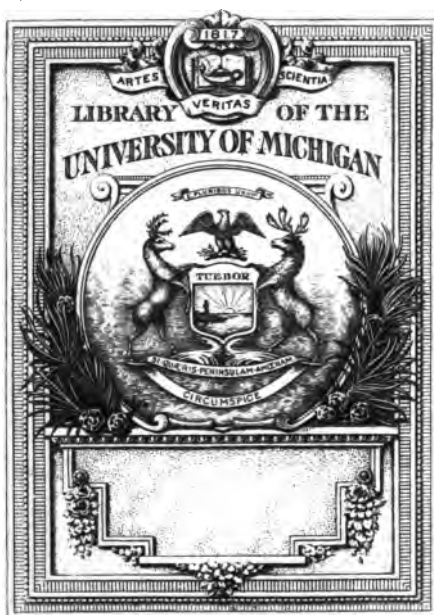
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King-Essay on Free Will



A
KEY TO DIVINITY:
OR, A
PHILOSOPHICAL
ESSAY
ON
FREE-WILL.

By the Most Reverend Father in God
WILLIAM King
Lord Archbishop of DUBLIN.

PART I.

He that takes away *Reason*, to make way for
Revelation, puts out the light of Both; and
does much what the same, as if he should
perswade a man to put out his eyes, the bet-
ter to receive the remote Light of an in-
visible star by a Telescope.

Lock. Ess. concerning Hum. Underst. IV. xix. 4.

L O N D O N.

sold by M. Lawrence in the Poultry: J. Noon, and
T. Sharpey in Cheapside: S. Popping in Pater-noster-
row: A. Boulter at Temple-bar. MDCCXV.

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TO

MR. SAMUEL HOLDEN,
Merchant.

S I R,

I T is somewhat strange, that, in an age of light, we should sit down so Lazy, and Unconcern'd, under the Delusion of Words, and Prejudices of Education. we are generally so well satisfied with a Jargon of Terms of most Unsettled signification, which we learn, when hardly reasonable, from Weak Instructors, or Unintelligible Catechisms; that we are loth to review them, in riper years, and Determine their meaning. hence we talk so wildly of Grace, Free-will, Predestination, &c; and play off Calvinists, Arminians, Antinomians, and other opprobrious nick-names; with all the enginery of Uncharitable Ignorance. In the poor Populace, 'tis a puzable case: and so much the more; because we can hardly hope for a Remedy, while Pride, Passion, and the paltry Interests of Party-making, reign in the hearts of those, who have the Blessed Advantages of Education. notwithstanding which, Good God! how do we Grope in the Dark, and Rage against one another at Random. In Nature, Philosophers confound our Reason with Romances; then fairly acknowledge their absurdity; and gravely tell us, Infinites are Incomprehensible. so, It is Demonstrable, say they, that Quantity is Divisible in infinitum; and yet, for all this,

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IV The DEDICATION.

this, it is liable to Undesirable Objections. in Religion, Divines perplex our Faith with Mysteries; then turn them into Creeds, or Catechisms; and command us to Believe what they tell us is Above our Reason, yea and even contrary to it. thus Mr. Gilbert is angry with Mr. Clark for giving up all such explanations of the Eternal Generation of the Son of God. which can be reduc'd to imply or involve any Contradiction.

Now, for my part, as, in accounting for the appearances of Nature, I esteem the Insensible Particles of the Moderns as unsatisfactory as the Occult Qualities of the Ancients: so, in the more important affairs of Religion, to propose things Above Reason, as Objects of Faith, is as ridiculous, as to bid me Believe or what I know nothing of. Far, therefore, from crying up Faith in opposition to Reason; in My Opinion, with Mr. Lock, that Reason must be our last Judge and Guide in Every thing. 'tis This assures me of the Necessity of Religion, and the Excellency of Christianity: by This I Interpret my Bible, and Understand my Duty: without It I should be a Beast, not knowing to Defend the Doctrines of Faith, or Conquer the Pretences of Irreligion.

Mov'd by These Considerations, and determin'd by Your Good Judgment, I publish this Translation, for the sake of those that don't understand the Original, the Subject is of much moment, not only for the Satisfaction of a Mind, but also for the Conduct of Life: it has been strangely perplex'd and darkn'd, by Dull, and Designing men. a Clear Notion of it will be very serviceable to solve many Difficulties in Divinity. therefore, I hope, Where the Bishop's Reasoning does not force Assent, his Authority will extort the Animadversions of the Ingenious; which will be pleasing to Your Unprejudic'd Search after Truth, and answer the End of

Your very Humble Servant.



De Origine Mali.

Chapter V. Section i. Subsection i.

SECTION i.

Of the nature of Choice.

SUBSECTION i.

Their Opinion consider'd, who allow Freedom from External Force only, not from Internal Necessity.

1. **I**F there be any thing in science obscure, and difficult; it certainly is in that part, which *pag.* treats of *Choice*, and *Freedom*. in all philo- 91
sophy there is not one topic, in which learned men do less agree with themselves, or differ more from one another: nor is it easy to understand them; or certainly and truly to represent their opinions. they may, I think, be divided into two sects. both acknowledge Freedom: the one *from External Force*, but not from *Internal Necessity*; the other *from Both*.

2. As to the *First*, their opinion I take to be this:
First, They observe that there are certain appetites implanted in us: not to no purpose; but for our pre- 92
servation: that to these appetites some things are
naturally suitable; some things contrary: that the former, by their presence, produce agreeable sensations;
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the latter, disagreeable. these they call inconvenient and evil; those convenient and good.

3. *Secondly*, They observe that nature has given us reason, or understanding, to distinguish convenient from inconvenient, good from evil: and (as these may be consider'd by the mind three ways) that there are three sorts of good or evil; that is, *pleasant*, *profitable*, and *virtuous*. [4.] For if good be consider'd as present, with respect only to that appetite, which may acquiesce in its fruition; it is called *pleasant*. [5.] But if it does not, of it-self, suit the appetite; but is only connected with something that may; it is called *usefull*. For, though the appetite cannot immediately enjoy it; yet the mind makes use of it for the attainment of those things, which it may enjoy: and therefore it is esteem'd *convenient*; that is, good. [6.] But, since what is suitable to one appetite may be contrary, or less suitable to others; and what now pleases may be connected with what may afterwards displease: that there is need of inquiry, and deliberation, to attain an absolute good; such, as, considering all the appetites, at all times, may give the greatest, most certain, and durable pleasure: that, for this purpose, there is given us a mind, or understanding, that, by its assistance, after having examin'd every thing, that can, either at present, or for the future, create, 93 either pleasure, or pain; that which appears *best*, may be chosen. now what is thus judg'd to be best by the understanding, unless there be a *Mistake*, is to be accounted *virtuous*; since that is virtuous, which is suitable to a reasonable agent: now, this is suitable, and the very dictate of reason, after having weigh'd all things, to prefer those, which give the greater, more certain, and more durable advantages. [7.] These three sorts of goods, in as much as they regard man, the maintainers of this opinion do esteem *moral* goods: since they fall under the direction of reason. but, since all cannot, allways, be had together; they must be compar'd, and what appears best be chosen. now, as well, different kinds, as particulars of the same kind, may

may be compar'd together. for instance, health is; in it self, pleasant; and to be chosen above all things that concern the body: but, for the preservation of it, physick must sometimes be taken; which, in it self, is not at all agreeable to the appetite: but, since it is in order to attain an end, in it self, pleasant; it is said to be usefull; and therefore eligible. but the goods of the mind are greater, more certain, and more durable than the goods of the body; if therefore they cannot be obtain'd, without the loss of health, or even of life; right reason dictates, that health, and life, on their account, are to be disregarded: for it is evident, that, all things consider'd, that is best, and therefore virtuous. And as goods of different kinds may be compar'd together, so also may particular goods of the same kind; as will appear to any one, that will consider it.

8. As for *liberty*, the men of this sect will have it to consist in this, that an agent, of all these goods, can chuse that, which is most pleasing to it; and put forth those actions, which its own reason approves. for he, that, in acting, can follow his own judgment, according to them, is Free. for instance, one that has his health, and his limbs, if all external impediments be remov'd, is free to walk. for, if he will, he can: nor is there any thing wanting to exert that action, but to will it. [9.] As for the actions of the *will*, that is, to will, or suspend the act of willing, they think that it is not determin'd to these actions by it self, for that is impossible; but by something without. if you ask, by what; they answer, by *pleasure*, or *pain*, perceiv'd by the understanding, or by the senses; or rather, as they think, by a present or most pressing pain. now, since these things are effected in us, by something without us, and not by the will; they are not in its power, but arise from the things themselves. according to them, therefore, it is evident, that, with respect to willing, or nilling, (that is, with respect to the immediate actions of the will) we are not free, at least from necessity. for this reason;

some of them do expressly affirm, that, with respect to these actions, freedom does not belong to men ; that choice cannot be said to be free ; or man, with respect to it : and therefore they will have it, that freedom properly belongs to us, with respect to the actions of the inferior faculties ; which are under the direction of the will, and exert themselves when the man has will'd : that is, he that can, if he will, is free to walk ; but he is not free to will it : for he has not the will to walk, from himself, but from without. yet he that can do what he wills, with them, is free, though he be necessarily determin'd to will.

10. If it be granted that this is the nature of choice ; there is no doubt but that all our actions are really necessary. for, as to the proper actions of the will (that is to will, or to suspend the act of willing) with respect to these, they deprive us of freedom, in affirming that it does not belong to them. For they think that
 25 it is necessary, when anything is, by the understanding, propos'd to be done, that we should either will, or suspend the willing it, according to the prospect of the pleasure, or the urgency of the pain ; which, in the present state and circumstances of things, are presented to the mind : they will have it therefore, that choice is determin'd by these. [11.] But, if, after choice, we can do what we will ; then, with respect to such actions, they say we are free ; but not from necessity ; but only from force. for it is manifest, that there is nothing wanting to put forth these actions, but our willing them ; and, upon our willing them, they necessarily follow. for instance, when nothing hinders a man from walking, but his willing it ; supposing that will, he must walk ; nor, while he wills it, can he be still. if therefore, according to them, all actions of the will be necessary ; (as being determin'd from without, by the agreeableness or disagreeableness of things, or circumstances) the actions of the inferior faculties will be no less necessary ; for they will depend upon the same circumstances, and the action of the will : which being necessary, those actions will be

no less necessary. though therefore, according to them, there be no force of the will; yet there is a necessity: nor will there be any thing in nature free from that necessity; nay, many of them openly profess that they believe it to be so.

12. Now from this hypothesis, which they extend as well to the divine will, as to the human, the following inferences seem deducible.

First, That nothing in nature could have been otherwise than it is. for the whole series of things being connected, as it were, by fate, there remains no room for chance, or freedom properly so called; and consequently there can be no such thing as contingency.

13. *Secondly*, By a wrong or evil choice nothing else can be understood, than a choice that is hurtfull to him that chuses, or to others: which sense is different from the common sense of the word: a bad choice⁹⁶ being commonly blam'd, not because it is hurtfull; but because it is, without necessity, hurtfull; and made otherwise than it ought to be. so that, upon this hypothesis, there is no such thing as making a wrong choice: nor can any thing be said to be done otherwise than it ought to be; for, what could not be done otherwise, is certainly done as it ought to be: since it is done according to the exigency, and necessary order of things.

14. *Thirdly*, Every evil would, in the strictest sense, be natural; as arising from natural, and necessary causes: so there would be no room for any distinction between natural, and moral evils, as commonly understood: for there would be no moral evil; that alone, by the common consent of mankind, being reckon'd a moral evil, of which a man is properly the cause: but no one reckons himself properly the cause of that which he could not avoid, or to which he was necessitated by natural causes, antecedent to his will. for it is on this head only that a man accuses himself, when, of himself, without necessity, he has been the cause of evil to himself, or others. the evils, that of necessity befall him, he reckons to be miseries and misfortunes, not crimes. Upon this hypothesis therefore, theft,

theft, whoredom, perjury, yea the hatred of God, and the basest of sins, (as well as the infamy, and punishment, that attend them) are to be reckon'd as parts of a man's misery and unhappiness; but not charg'd upon him as crimes, or esteem'd contrary to the divine will, justice, purity, or goodness, any more than heat, or cold.

15. *Fourthly*, When therefore a thief, adulterer, murderer, or perjur'd person is blam'd, and the crimes censur'd as base; it is not done, because the persons have deserv'd to be blam'd, or because the crimes are really in themselves base; but because the disgrace may be a cause of deterring others from such a choice: 27 and hence alone it is that we chide a thief, (&c.) not a sick person, as infamous; because chiding may cure a thief, (&c.) but not a sick person.

16. *Fifthly*, It follows that malefactors are punish'd, not because they have deserv'd it; but because it is expedient: and that laws are us'd to restrain vice, as physic to remove diseases: that therefore men sin, after the same manner as they die, for want of a sufficient medicin. that laws however are not in vain; since they prevent some vices, as physick prevents the death of some sick persons: and that one, that has the plague, may be put to death, in hopes of preventing an infection; as lawfully as one, that deals with the devil.

17. *Sixthly*, It follows that we are oblig'd to repay benefits, only because, by being grateful, we may excite our benefactor to continue, or encrease his benevolence, and others to practise it. Hence it is, that we are oblig'd to be gratefull to God and men, but not to the sun, or to a horse; because God and men, by gratitude, may be mov'd to do us more kindness; not so the sun, or a horse. so that there is no regard to be had to a benefit receiv'd, but only to one that may be receiv'd; nor are we oblig'd to be gratefull to the most generous benefactor, on the account of a past kindness; but only in prospect of a future benefit. so all sense of gratitude is destroy'd, as it is generally under-

understood : for, he is generally esteem'd a cunning and designing, not a gratefull person, that repays one benefit, in hopes of another.

18. *Seventhly*, If this opinion be true, mankind must despair of happiness : which, on these principles, is so far from being in our own power, that it will entirely depend upon external things. our happiness, (if there be any such thing) according to them, must arise from a perfect enjoyment of things agreeable to our appetites. where, either things contrary are present, or things suitable wanting, we must be uneasy and unhappy. upon this hypothesis therefore it follows, that our happiness necessarily requires such an enjoyment, as is impossible. for, what man can hope that all external things, that may affect him, will be temper'd to his wishes, so, as that he shall never want what he wishes, or be forced to bear things contrary to his natural appetites.

19. These things, and more that might be added, may seem harsh, and repugnant to the common sense of mankind. I confess indeed, that, generally, arguments against an opinion, drawn from consequences, are least conclusive ; since many things are true, that are attended with very harsh consequences : not to mention the easiness of mistakes in drawing consequences. yet, when they have been acknowledg'd by the authors themselves, and the belief of them is very prejudicial to morality ; they weigh considerably against the opinion from which they are deduced ; and recommend, as more probable, a different opinion, though founded upon no better reasons.

20. Of this sect I reckon those, who affirm that the will is determin'd by the last judgment of the understanding ; and, in short, all who suppose the will to be passive in choosing. their opinion about freedom is the same, however they explain it. which appears from this, that most of them expressly deny, that *indifferency* belongs to the nature of freedom : so that their opinion is encumber'd with the same consequences, as the former.

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SUBSECTION 2.

The common opinion consider'd, that Freedom is no less from Necessity, than from Force.

1. **I**N this opinion are deliver'd much the same things, as in the former, concerning goodness, or the agreeableness of things to our appetites: nor is there much difference in their doctrines of the distinction of good, into pleasant, profitable, and virtuous; unless it be, that this refers virtuous to the *duty* which a man owes to God, Himself, and Others, as a member of an intelligent society; rather than to the natural appetites; and supposes that we must judge from that, rather than from these, of the suitableness of things. as to choice, they affirm: that a free agent is not determin'd, as brutes, by objects, according to corporeal appetites, whence all their actions are necessary; but that man has another principle in himself, and determines himself to action.

2. This distinguishing principle the asserters of this opinion, if I rightly understand them, do explain thus.

First, They suppose that there is a chief good, the enjoyment of which would make happy: that men naturally and necessarily desire it; and that they cannot reject it, when duly represented by the understanding: that other things have regard to this good, or some connexion with it; and are to be esteem'd good, or evil, as they help, or hinder the obtaining of it. but, since there is nothing in things, but what, in different regards, may either promote, or hinder the attainment of this end; they suppose that we have, from this indifferance, an occasion of rejecting, or receiving any thing. for, tho' we can chuse nothing, unless consider'd as good, that is, unless some way or other connected with the chief good, as a means, or appendage; yet choice is not determin'd thereby: because every object may be varied, and represented by the understanding in different views.

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3. *Secondly*, They suppose, when any good is propos'd, which is not the chief good, that the will can suspend its act, and oblige the understanding to propose, either something else, or the same in a different view: which is always possible; since all, except the chief good, are of such a nature, that the understanding may apprehend some respect, in which they may be inconvenient. though therefore the will always follows some judgment of the understanding, which it makes concerning our actions; yet it is not necessarily determin'd by any: for it may suspend its act, and command another judgment. since therefore the will can either exert, or suspend its act, it is not only free from force; but also indifferent, in it self, as to its acts, and determines it self without necessity.

4. I confess that this opinion does establish freedom; and so agrees with the common sense and experience of mankind: but there are some things in it that are taken for granted, and not clearly enough explain'd.

5. *First*, The will is suppos'd to determine it self: yet we are not told how it is determin'd; nor of what use such a power would be, if it was admitted. nay, it seems to be more prejudicial, than advantageous, to mankind: for, that goodness, to which the will is suppos'd to be carried, is in the things themselves, and arises from their connexion with the chief good. it is not therefore to be made, but shew'd by the understanding. if therefore the understanding does its duty, it will show what is best. now it is expedient for us to be determin'd to what is best: it had been better therefore for man, if nature had left him to be absolutely determin'd by the judgment of the understanding, and had not permitted that judgment to be suspended by the command of the will. for, so, he would more surely and easily have attain'd his end. nor is there any reason we should be much concern'd about Glory, that arises from a choice well made: for, the enjoyment of that which is best, without it, would make us happy: nay, that glory would be empty and contemptible, if com-

compar'd with the enjoyment of the chief good. I confess, that if man was determin'd, in his actions, to what is best; there would be no room for *virtue* properly so-call'd. for virtue, as it is generally understood, requires a free act.

6. *Secondly*, If they say that in many things the understanding is at a loss, and knows not what is best; that in those things therefore freedom takes place: even so, the matter is not clear'd. for if the things, that are to be done, are in themselves good or evil; but not known to the understanding: the will signifies nothing; nor does its freedom help to discover or obtain what is best. but if they are indifferent; it's no matter what we do: since the good and evil, on both sides, are equal. If therefore freedom be allow'd in these only, it will be of no use or importance to life, or happiness. nay, it must be regarded as an imperfection: since it arises from the imperfection of the understanding. for if the understanding could certainly determin what is best to be done, there would be no room for freedom.

7. *Thirdly*, These men are not fully agreed what the chief good is; from a connexion with which, the understanding judges of the goodness of other things. this appears from their various and contrary opinions about it. we must therefore be wavering, and solicitous, and even rebell against nature it self; that has neither fixt an end, nor allow'd us means to attain it: but left us uncertain and perplex about the way, 703 that leads to happiness, without any help from our freedom; which is blind, and can do nothing towards the bringing us back into the right way.

8. *Fourthly*, All allow, that Good, in general, is what is universally agreeable, and what all desire. every good therefore answers some Appetite; and, according to these men, things are good, because of the natural and necessary suitableness, which they have to our appetites. the understanding therefore doth not *make* good, but *finds* it in the things themselves. when therefore it judges any thing in nature agreeable,

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it must necessarily be, according to them, with respect to some natural appetite. so that every good, that is in things, must be the object of some appetite, or faculty, that is, of the understanding, sense, &c. now, all these, as to the appetites and faculties which they respect, that is, as to *pleasure*, or the agreeableness of them, are determined by nature: but, as to the respect which they bear to one another, that is, as to their *usefulness* and *virtue*, they are to be judg'd by reason; and order'd, when, and how, they shall give place to each other, and be mutually serviceable. freedom therefore seems of no service: for if it certainly follows the direction of reason, it is not free, at least from necessity; since that very reason, which it follows, is not free: but if it does not necessarily follow reason, we had better be without it; since it perverts all things, and confounds the order of reason, which is best. and consequently such a freedom would be prejudicial to men: for it would make them liable to sin; nor could it make amends for so great an evil, with any good.

9. *Fifthly*, The judgment of the understanding, about the goodness of a thing, is supposed to be a condition, without which the will is not carried towards an object. but the will can either exert, or suspend its act about any good. let us suppose therefore that the understanding has judg'd it good to put forth an action, and bad to suspend it; while this judgment remains, if the will can suspend the action, it is carried to evil; if it cannot, it is not free. You will say, it can command the understanding to change its judgment. be it so: but it is plain it suspends its act, before it can command the understanding to change its judgment: that is, while the judgment remains that it is evil to suspend an action, it doth suspend it. it is therefore directly carried to that which reason judges to be evil: which seems to overthrow all their hypotheses.

10. I confess that they bring solutions to these difficulties: but they are so fine-spun, so obscure, and

and so much above the conceptions of the vulgar ; that many, offended with them, have deserted the cause of freedom, as desperate ; and fallen in with the former sect. but if any one would more clearly and fully express the common opinion, or undertake to produce solutions of the difficulties that encumber it ; I should be so far from opposing ; that I should be ready to assist in the enquiry, and assent to the discovery. This is a thing very much to be wish'd for : in the mean time I shall endeavour, as well as I can, to explain these things somewhat differently, and more evidently.

SUBSECTION 3.

Another notion of Freedom and Choice propos'd.

1. **T**HAT my meaning may be better understood, it must be observ'd

First, That there are certain powers, faculties, and appetites, implanted in us by nature ; which are design'd for action; and which, when they put forth their proper acts about objects, do cause in us a grateful and agreeable sensation. their exercise therefore is pleasing : and it is probable that all the pleasure and delight, which we receive, arises from hence. our felicity and happiness therefore, if there be any such thing, seems to consist in a suitable exercise of the powers, and faculties, which we have by nature. for they seem to be implanted in us for no other end; than, by their use and exercise, to effect those things, that are pleasing : nor can they otherwise acquiesce, or enjoy themselves, than when those things are effected by them, or in them, for the doing, and receiving which, they were ordained by nature. now every power and faculty is ordain'd to exercise its proper acts : by exercise therefore it attains its end ; which is to be esteem'd the greatest perfection, and happiest state of every thing. for that is, if any such can be conceiv'd,

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a state of happiness; in which is every thing that is pleasing, and nothing that is displeasing. nor can any condition, I think, be conceiv'd more happy.

2. *Secondly*, it must be observ'd, that among the appetites, faculties, and powers, which we have, some are determin'd to their actions by objects peculiar to themselves. for, when the objects are present, if they are rightly dispos'd; they necessarily put forth their acts; and, when the objects are removed, they cease from acting: nor are they carried towards any other objects, than those that are peculiar to them: so the sight perceives nothing but light, colours, &c: and, when they are remov'd, its action ceases. the understanding distinguishes between objects, that are receiv'd by the senses, and those that are perceiv'd by reflexion; it digests them; and lays them up in the memory: yet it has certain bounds, beyond which it cannot go: and so of the rest. there is therefore between these powers, and objects, a sort of fixt agreement, and natural relation: from whence, on the presence of objects, they put forth their actions, and, by their exercise, please themselves; but, on the presence of those which hinder their exercise, they are displeas'd. If therefore there be any force in any thing, by nature, to promote or hinder the exercise of any power, or faculty; that, with respect to the faculty, must be esteem'd either good or evil. [3.] The power, or faculty it self does easily distinguish those things, that actually promote or hinder its exercise; but the understanding judges of things absent, and future; and, what the mind determins to be best in them, that we are oblig'd to attempt: he that doth otherwise violates the precept of reason. if therefore all the powers and faculties were thus determin'd to proper objects, freedom would seem to be an imperfection; and man had much better have been without it; since it is an occasion of no good to him, but of the greatest evil, that is, a capacity of sinning.

4. *Thirdly*, I think we may conceive a power, of a different nature from these: more indifferent as to the objects, about which it exercises it self; and to

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which one thing should not be more agreeable than another, by nature; but that shou'd be most agreeable, to which it should happen to be apply'd: between which, and the object, to which it is determin'd by it self, or by another, there should be, by nature, no greater agreement, or relation, than between that, and any thing else; and the agreement, that there is, should arise from the application, or determination. for, as the earth is by nature no one's property; but becomes the property of him that first occupies it, and from thence arises the property: so also it seems possible, that there may be a power, to which no object, by nature, peculiarly agrees; but any one may become agreeable to it, if it happens to be apply'd: since, as it has been said, from its application arises its agreement. but that a power can create to itself agreeableness with an object, by applying itself to that, or that to it, seems no more absurd, than that a man can acquire a right to any thing, by occupying it. for, as, in civil laws, some things are forbidden, because they are inconvenient; but other things inconvenient and evil, because forbidden: so it seems possible in the powers, faculties, and appetites, that some things may be determin'd by the natural agreeableness of objects; but that, in other things, agreeableness with objects may arise from determination. for the faculty may be carried to exercise it self by nature: but this exercise may please it, and not another; not from any natural agreeableness of one, more than another; but from the application of the faculty it self. for oftentimes a different thing might have pleas'd no less, had it happen'd to have been determin'd to it. nothing therefore seems to hinder, but that such a power, or faculty, may be suppos'd, at least, with respect to most objects.

5. *Fourthly*, If then we suppose that there is such a power, it will be evident, that the agent, endow'd with it, cannot be determin'd, in its actions, by any goodness preexisting in the objects. for since the agreement (at least in many things) between it and the object, is suppos'd to arise from determination; the agreeableness cannot be the cause of that determination, on which

which it self depends : but the agreeableness of the object to the faculty is all its goodness. nothing therefore is good, with respect to this power, at least in the objects, towards which it is indifferent, till it has embraced it; or evil, till it hath rejected it. since therefore the determination of the power to the object is prior to its goodness, and the cause of it; it cannot be determin'd by that goodness in its actions.

6. *Fifthly*, If such a power be granted, it cannot be determin'd by any pain occasion'd by objects : for it is suppos'd to be indifferent, not only as to external things, but also as to its own operations; and to please it self, whether it receives or rejects any thing, and whether it puts forth this or that act. these things therefore will neither be pleasing, nor painfull, till that indifference be remov'd. now it is suppos'd to be remov'd by the application or determination of the power : and therefore pain supposes its determination, but doth not cause it. Let us suppose that this power is determin'd (no matter whence) to embrace an object, or to put forth proper acts about it; it is evident that this determination is attended with a desire, and that desire with an endeavour to obtain, and enjoy the object, according to the application of the power. but if any thing should hinder this endeavour, so that the power could not perform the acts, which it undertook to put forth about the object; then would pain arise from the hindrance of the power. pain therefore would be the effect of the determination of this power, and not the cause of it.

7. *Sixthly*, If we suppose such an agent endow'd with understanding; the agent might use it to propose what to do, but not to determin whether he should do this, or that. for the understanding, or reason, if it be just, represents what is in things; and does not feign what it does not find in them. since therefore things, before the determination of this power, with respect to it, are suppos'd to be indifferent; and that one thing is not more pleasing, or painfull than another : if the understanding do its duty, it will represent this indifference; and will not pronounce

one thing more eligible than another. for the understanding no otherwise directs to do a thing, than by determining it to be better. since therefore the goodness of things, as to this power, depends upon its determination; and things are, for the most part, good, if it embrace them; and evil, if it reject them: it is plain that the judgment of the understanding about things depends upon it; and the understanding cannot pronounce them to be good, or evil, till it knows whether this power hath received them, or rejected them. the understanding therefore must expect the determination of this power, before it can make a judgment; and not the power expect the judgment of the understanding, before it be determin'd.

8. *Seventhly*, But tho' this power, in its operations, cannot be determin'd by any judgment of the understanding; yet the understanding is necessary, to propose things to be done; and to distinguish those that are possible from those that are impossible. for tho' the goodness of things, with respect to this agent, arises from its determination; yet possibility, or impossibility, is in things themselves; and there is need of the understanding to distinguish between them; lest the agent, falling upon absurdities, procure to it self pain, not that a thing is therefore good, because possible; for, if rejected, it will be evil; nor will it therefore be immediately displeasing, because impossible. for the attempting a thing impossible may be pleasing: (for it may give exercise to the power; and that is it, as has been said, that is pleasing in things) but he that attempts this must necessarily, in the event, be unhappy. for when a thing, undertaken by the power, cannot be effected; pain must necessarily attend the power, disappointed of its end, and hinder'd in its exercise. [9] And this is the *first limitation*, that must necessarily be assign'd to such a power; that is, that it
 110 keep it self within possibilities: nor is there need of any other limitation, if the agent be of infinite power, in order, allways, to attain its end.

9. *Eighthly*, But if the agent be of finite power, it will be necessary to consult his own strength; and not
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determin any thing that is above it. for, so, he will be frustrated in the attempt, no less than if he had attempted things absolutely impossible. And this is a *second limitation* of this power. You will say, it is not possible for the appetite to be carried to those things, which the understanding plainly declares not to be in the power of the agent : I answer, that the senses, and natural appetites, delight in their objects, and please themselves, notwithstanding the representations of reason, condemning the pleasure as pernicious : how much more easily may it be conceiv'd, that this factitious appetite, that has its rise in an agent by application only, shou'd be pleas'd with its own good, though the understanding oppose and condemn that joy, as foolish, and fleeting ? But why nature allow'd so much to this power, and how it is expedient for the universe, shall be explain'd hereafter. [11.] Hitherto we have consider'd this power in an agent, as alone, or with the understanding : but we may conceive an agent endow'd with it, to have also at the same time other powers, and appetites, determin'd to objects by a natural agreeableness. But neither can it be determin'd by these in its operations. we must distinguish between the acts of these appetites, and the pleasure arising from the exercise of them. It is necessary that, if they be rightly dispos'd, they should put forth their acts upon the presence of objects ; but it is not at all necessary that they should delight in them, or be pleas'd with them. for instance, a rank bitter savor is unpleasing to the taste : but, in pressing hunger, tho' it is perceiv'd, yet it is pleasing ; the craving of the appetite overcoming the unpleasantness of the taste. but that pleasure is not pure, and sincere ; but mixt, and diminisht according to the excess of the appetite that overcomes. for, let us suppose that the pain of hunger has three degrees, and bitterness two ; that the agent may avoid three, he must necessarily bear two : these then being deducted, there remains one degree only of solid pleasure ; which wou'd have been three, if he had had proper and pleasant food. [12.] Since therefore the pleasure, that arises from the satisfying these natural appetites,

lives, may be overcome by a stronger appetite; there is no doubt, but that all other powers and appetites may be overcome by this power, which is indifferent as to objects. for, all these are limited by objects, and so have a sort of bound in their actions: but this power has no bound; nor is there any thing, in which it cannot please itself, if it does but happen to be determin'd to it. now; whereas the natural appetites may be contrary to one another, and one may be overcome by the excess of another: how much easier may this power be conceiv'd to cross these appetites; and, being of a superior, and almost different kind, it is probable that it overcomes all others; but can be overcome by none. [13.] Yea; it seems to have been given to this end, that the agent may have somewhat to please itself with, when things pleasing to the natural appetites cannot be had, as it very often happens. the natural appetites, receiving pleasure and pain from objects, must of necessity, according to the laws of motion, and the order of external things, miss of pleasure, and meet with pain: being therefore often disappointed, they do also expose the agents, in which they are implanted, to pain; as well as make them capable of pleasure. but such an agent as this may always have wherewith to please itself: and it is expedient for it to be able to desert the other appetites; and, by restraining, or counteracting them, to please itself for, since every faculty is pleas'd with the exercise of itself; the force of this faculty can by no other means be made more conspicuous, than by sometimes crossing the appetites. for, either this must sometimes be; or the agent must be absolutely in pain, being depriv'd of all good: since, by the laws of nature, things contrary to the appetites must be born. [14.] And hence plainly appears how desirable such a power would be. for, if it should happen to be determin'd to things agreeable to the natural appetites; it would encrease the enjoyments: and if determin'd to bear things contrary to the appetites, which sometimes they must necessarily bear; it would lessen the pain, yea take it away, or turn it into pleasure. [15.] I must confess, that, here-

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by, there is a sort of struggle occasion'd in such an agent: but it is better to bear the struggle together with some pleasure, though small and unsincere; than to be overwhelm'd with solid pain. nay, the very consciousness of being able to please one's self, in spite of natural appetites, may cause a greater pleasure, than the enjoyment of what these appetites are pleas'd with could give, if it was present. But this agent is oblig'd to have a regard to these appetites: nor are they to be cross'd without necessity; or restrain'd from a suitable enjoyment of objects: he that shall do so, will procure to himself unnecessary struggles, and sorrows. though therefore it is not at all expedient, that such a power should be determin'd by the natural appetites; yet it is fit that they should have a power to persuade it; and that regard should be had to them, when it is determin'd. And this is to be reckon'd its *third limitation*.

16. *Nimblely*, An agent, endow'd with such a principle, would be in it self active; and, in its operations, determinable by its self alone. for, it is necessary that it should be determin'd sometimes: for, when any thing is propos'd to be done, it must necessarily, ¹¹³ either act, or suspend its act: one of the two must be done: but the doing either of them is determining the power. nor is there less force necessary to suspend, than to exert an act; as every one's reason and experience will inform him: since therefore it cannot be determin'd by any good, or evil, præexisting in things; nor by the natural appetites; nor by their objects: it must, of necessity, either remain undetermin'd, or determin it self. but though, by nature, it be undetermin'd; yet when any particular thing is propos'd, it must be determin'd: and, there being nothing without to determin it, it must determin it self: this determination we shall call *choice*. for, being by nature indifferent, it will please it self by choosing one thing rather than another. [17.] Nor is it proper to ask what it is that determins it to choose. for, if any such thing was suppos'd, it would not be indifferent: that is to say, it is contrary to the nature of this agent, that there should be any thing

thing that should determin it. Concerning a *passive* power, which has a natural and necessary agreement with an object, by the presence of which it is determin'd to act, it is proper enough to ask, what is the good, that determins it to put forth any action : not so concerning an *active* power ; the nature of which is, that it can, by its act, make an object agreeable to it, that is, good. for, here, the goodness of the object does not precede the act of choice, in order to produce the act ; but choice causes goodness in the object : that is, a thing is pleasing, because it is chosen ; not chosen, because it is pleasing. it is not therefore proper to enquire after any other cause of choice, but the power it self. [18.] You will say, if this be true, such an agent will be determin'd by *chance*, not by *reason* : I answer, Chance will have no room here ; if by chance
 114 be meant what happens besides the intention of the agent. for, the choice it self is the intention of the agent : but for an agent to intend besides its intention is impossible. As to reason, he, who prefers a less good before a greater, must be thought to have chose without reason : but he, who, by choosing, makes that good, which, before his choice, was not good ; or makes that a greater good, which before was less : certainly chooses with reason. You may urge, that, at least, a *contingency* must be admitted ; that is to say, that some things, which are not necessary, are done by such an agent. such a contingency I readily acknowledge : for it is that very *liberty*, that I would establish.

19. *Tenthly*, It is evident, that such an agent wou'd be the true *cause* of its actions ; and, that to it may justly be imputed whatever is done by it. that power, that is determin'd to act by another, is not indeed the *efficient cause* of its own actions ; but only the *instrumental*, or *occasional cause*, if we may so express it with certain Philosophers. for, the effect may be said to be produced *in it*, or *by it* ; rather than that it *produceth* the effect. and therefore no one imputes to himself, or reckons himself the cause of those actions, to which he believes he is necessarily determin'd. if therefore any inconvenience arises from them, he will reckon

reckon it a *misfortune*, not a *crime*; and, whatever it be, he will charge it upon the power that determin'd him: nor will he be displeas'd with himself, unless he be conscious, that it was in his power not to have done it: but of this no one can be conscious, who is determin'd by another, unless through a mistake, or ignorance. for no causes, but those that are free, ought to be esteem'd real. for they, that act, necessarily, must be conceiv'd to be passive; and we must have recourse to another, that lays a necessity upon them, till we come to one that is free; and in that we must stop. now an agent, endow'd with such a power, being determin'd by it self, not by another; and being free in its actions: we must stop in that, as in the true cause; and to that ought to be imputed, whatever is done by it, good, or ill.

20. *Eleventhly*, It is manifest that such an agent is capable of *happiness*. for he is happy that can always please himself. and it is plain that such an agent can always please it self. for, since things are suppos'd to please it, not from any necessity of nature; but from mere choice; and there is nothing to force it to choose one thing, rather than another: it is plain that *an agent, endow'd with this power, may always chuse what it may enjoy; and reject (that is, not desire, or not chuse) what cannot be had.* And hence it appears of how much importance it is, whether that *agreeableness*, by which things please the appetites, be settled by *nature*; or caus'd by the *agent* it self. for, if it be by nature, that is, if before choice there be good and evil in things, by which they please, or displease; on them also will depend the happiness of such an agent: and, unless the whole series of things be so order'd, that nothing can happen contrary to its appetites; it may fall short of happiness. for its appetite will be disappointed; which is what we call unhappiness. but, if it be from choice that things have their agreeableness, or disagreeableness; it is plain that he, who has that faculty, unless he chooses things impossible, &c. may always enjoy what he chooses; and never be disappointed of the thing desired: that is, he may be always

ways happy. not that all things, with respect to this power, are indifferent; for it admits, as has been said, certain limitations, in choosing beyond which it must necessarily lose its happiness.

22. *Itselfily*, We must observe that agents, whose happiness depends upon the agreeableness of external things to the appetites, have need of an *understanding that is perfect, and almost infinite*, distinctly to apprehend all the relations, habitudes, consequences, and natures of things. if they have not, it cannot be but that they must often fall into pernicious errors, and be disappointed of their desires; that is, be often miserable. hence necessarily arise anxiety, and trouble of mind; perplex with continual doubts and uncertainties, lest what they choose should not be best. either therefore such agents should have been created without a prospect of futurity, or endow'd with a perfect understanding; otherwise they must be very miserable. for scarce can any greater misery be conceiv'd, than to be kept in suspense about happiness; and be forced to make a choice in things not well understood; and in which a mistake is attended with unavoidable misery. But if the agreeableness of things be suppos'd to depend upon choice, an *understanding far from perfect* will be sufficient to direct such an agent; nor is there any need that it should perfectly understand the relations, and natures of things. for, if it can but distinguish what is possible from what is impossible, what is pleasing to the senses from what is displeasing, what is agreeable to the faculties from what is disagreeable; and consult its own strength, that is, what it is able to do: (all which things may easily be done) it knows enough to make it self happy. nor is there need of long deliberation about doing any thing, whether it be best, or most eligible. for, if choice be made within these bounds; that is best, which is chosen. [22.] That agent therefore, that is possess'd of this principle of pleasing it self by choice, cannot justly blame nature, though it has bestow'd but a very imperfect understanding. for, there always occur, within the bounds, things enough to exert its choice upon, and

and please it self with ; that is, it may be happy. tho' therefore freedom be of no use, as I said before, to an agent, that must be determin'd only by the agreeableness of external things ; nay, tho' it be pernicious, as subservient only to sin, and the perverting of reason : yet to an agent, whose happiness depends not upon things, but upon choice, it is of very great importance, and the only sure foundation of happiness. and hence appears how valuable, and how desirable such an active principle would be. [23.] All these things seem to be consistent, plain, and easy enough to be understood ; tho' esteem'd by some too subtle. It remains to enquire, whether this be a mere hypothesis, without foundation ; or whether there really is such a principle to be found in nature.

SUBSECTION 4.

That there is an Agent, whom things therefore please, because they are chosen.

1. **W**E have seen, in the former subsection, that some things, by the constitution of nature, are suited to the appetites ; and are therefore agreeable, and good : but we may conceive a power, that by suiting it self to things, or by fashioning things to it self, can cause an agreeableness, or goodness in them. and hence things please such an agent, not because they are in themselves good ; but they become good because they are chosen. how perfect, how useful such a power would be, we have already shown ; and, that there is such a power in nature, appears from hence, that God must necessarily be suppos'd to have it. for,

2. *First*, nothing in the creation is good, or evil, to him, before choice ; he has no appetite to be satisfy'd with the enjoyment of things without him ; he is therefore absolutely indifferent with respect to all external things ; nor can he receive good, or evil, from any. what therefore shou'd determin his will

will to act certainly nothing without him. he therefore determin's himself; and, as it were makes himself an appetite, by choosing. for, when he has made a choice, he will endeavour effectually to procure what he has chosen, with as much concern and diligence, as if he were incited to that endeavour by a natural, and necessary appetite; and will esteem that, which promotes the obtaining what he has chosen, good; and that, which hinders, evil.

3. *Secondly*, The divine will is the cause of goodness in created things; which almost all acknowledge do depend upon it. for created things receive all they are from the divine will; nor can they be any thing else, than what he will'd they should be. it is plain therefore that they all agree, and are conform'd to his efficacious, or permissive will; and that in this agreeableness is founded their original goodness. and, since all things proceed from one and the same will, which cannot be contrary to it self, being kept by infinite wisdom within its proper limits; it is also certain, that all things are as consistent among themselves, and that every thing tends as much to the preservation of it self, and of the whole, as was possible: and this is to be esteem'd their secondary goodness. and so all the goodness of the creatures is owing to the divine will, and depends upon it. for, in themselves, they could not be conceiv'd either good, or evil; since they were nothing before the act of the divine will: nor were they less distant from goodness, with respect to God himself; till, by willing them to exist, he made them, by that elective act, good in themselves; and, by a unity of will, consistent with one another. there is no doubt, but that the divine will, here, as in all other things, acted in concert both with his wisdom, and goodness. but it is from the will immediately that things please God; that is, that they are good. for there are many things that are not at all agreeable to his goodness, and wisdom; because he did not will them: and, so long as he does not will a thing, it cannot be good. whence we may fairly infer, that his will could not be determin'd to a choice from any goodness

goodness in the creatures. for, before choice, which is suppos'd to be the cause of goodness in created beings, nothing could be good, or evil: but, when a choice is made, that only is evil, which prevents the obtaining the thing chosen; and that good, that promotes it. the goodness therefore of things must be determin'd by their agreeableness to the divine will; and not the divine will by the agreeableness, or goodness of things. Therefore

4. *Thirdly*, They are not to be regarded, who hold that God chuses things, because they are good: as tho' good, and greater good, that he perceives in things, determin'd his will. for had it been so, it seems impossible that the world should have been made. for, they, that acknowledge God to be the author of it, confess also that he is, in himself, supremely, and absolutely happy; and stands in no need of others. and, indeed, it cannot be conceiv'd how external things can be of use to God, who has in himself all things, that are of any moment to the highest happiness. he must therefore necessarily be indifferent to all external things; nor can any reason be assign'd in things themselves, why he should prefer one thing before another. It is plain that things were created by God, with goodness; that is, with a certain agreeableness to his nature: but they were not made because of any agreeableness antecedent to the divine will; on the contrary, they necessarily agree, and please, because made by his free choice. for, since, in themselves, they are nothing, they must necessarily have both their existence, and their agreeableness, from that will, by which alone they are: nor is it possible that they should be disagreeable to the will that made them. for, things, in themselves, indifferent to God, by willing, he causes to be pleasing. [5.] If therefore such a power, as we have described, be not ¹²⁰ allow'd him; (that is, a capacity of pleasing himself, by determining himself to act, without any other regard to the quality of the object, than its being possible) it seems impossible for him ever to have begun to do any thing, without himself. for, no reason, as far

as I can perceive, can be imagin'd, why he should create any thing at all, why a world, why this world, why at the time in which it was created, why not before or after, why in this and not in another form : no loss, or profit, no advantage, or trouble, could arise to him from hence ; in short, nothing to move him to choose one thing before another. unless therefore there be allow'd to God an active power of determining himself in indifferent things, *pro hic & nunc* ; and, by the determination, according to his choice, to please himself ; he cou'd have done nothing at all : as to all external things he must have been for ever unactive ; nor could the world have been made ; since no reason can be imagin'd, why God, absolutely perfect in himself, absolutely happy, should create any thing without himself.

6. *Fourthly*, If we suppose that there was a reason, and that God, mov'd thereby, created external things ; it is manifest, that, upon such a supposition, God was necessitated to create all things. for he, who, by some thing from without, is determin'd to do any thing, is necessitated to act. for he is passive ; and must necessarily do, and suffer, not what he himself ; but what the cause, that determines him, has effected in him. now that goodness (which is suppos'd to be in things, before the divine choice, which determines it) is something external, with respect to the will of God. if therefore it be that, which determines his choice, it follows, that both the act of choice is necessary ; and all things, that depend upon it. [7.] But, if things please God, and are good, for this reason only, because he chose to make them so ; he will be free, and the world made, not of necessity, but choice. nor will it be impossible that it should be made, because useful in itself to God : for his choice will please him. Now from what has been said it sufficiently appears, of how much importance it is, that the goodness of the creatures should entirely depend upon the divine choice ; and not the divine choice on the goodness of the creatures, for so we may conceive necessity to be taken away, and liberty establish'd.

8. *Fifthly*,

8. *Fifthly*, But you will say, if he hop'd for no advantage from things, that he chose; why should he choose them? is it not more probable, that he would have made nothing? or have given himself any trouble about things, that would do him no good? To this it may be answer'd, that to him it is no more trouble to will things, than not to will them: and hence it is, that, when he wills them, they are; and cease to be, when he does not will them. which reason, since it supposes the indifference of things with respect to God, vindicates his liberty to act, or not to act; and proves, that what he chooses will please him. But there is yet a better reason, to wit, that God chose to make external things, that there might be something without him, in which he might take a pleasure. for every one is pleas'd in exerting the powers, and faculties, that he has. now God is of infinite power, which he can exercise infinite ways; but not all ways at once: for all are not consistent, but those, that are consistent, are, for the most part, indifferent; nor is there any reason, why he should prefer one before another. he must therefore, by his choice, make one thing please him more than another: otherwise it cannot be conceiv'd, how a thing, in it self indifferent to the chooser, should please him rather than another. [9.] Nor ought we to enquire after any reason of his choice; that is, why he should choose one thing rather than another. for the supposing a reason would destroy the indifference; nor would the choice be free. for, if good and evil, better and worse, be in things; it is manifest, that the divine goodness, and wisdom, would necessarily determine him to choose what is better. for who, without a fault, can neglect a better, and prefer a worse. as therefore, in things indifferent, there can be no reason why one should be prefer'd before another; so neither is there any need of it. for the divine will, being active in its self, and necessarily to be determin'd to one of the indifferent things, is to it self a reason of its own act, and freely determines its self. nay, such is the divine power, that what one soever of infinite possible

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things he shall choose, that will be best ; and therefore it is all one which he prefers. But

10. *Sixthly*, You may urge, that you do not yet understand how a power can determin it self ; that is, you do not know the manner. but we must not deny a thing, because we know not the manner how it is done. we are entirely ignorant *how* the rays of the sun, by moving the nerves of our eyes, cause an idea of light in the mind : nor do we know how the members of the body should be mov'd upon a thought of the mind, or at the command of the will : yet no one denies these things, because the manner, in which they are effected, is unknown. if therefore it be evident, that the divine will *doth* determin it self ; we are not much concern'd *how* it is done. [11.] But if we would confess the truth, it is as difficult to conceive a thing to be mov'd, or determin'd by another, as by its self : but we, accusom'd to material agents, which are all passive in their operations, being assur'd of the fact, are not at all concern'd about the manner. but if we consider the matter thoroughly, we no more know how motion is communicated from one body to another, than how the will moves it self : but the one seems nothing strange, because it is seen always, and in every action ; but the other, being seldom done, that is by the will

12. only, is esteem'd incredible. and though experience and reason prove that it is so ; yet, because the manner is unknown, we are ready to suspect we are mistaken. the occasion of the mistake is, because the will, being the only active power, that we know of, and all the rest passive ; we are hardly induc'd to believe, that there really is such a power ; and we judge of it, by comparing it with other agents : which, since they move not, unless mov'd, we are ready to seek a mover in the divine will also : very absurdly ; since it is evident, that if there were not in nature an active power, neither could there be a passive ; and, if nothing could move without a mover, there could not have been any such thing as motion, or action. for it cannot be conceiv'd how it cou'd begin. but it is more difficult to conceive how motion could be, without a begin-

beginning; that how an agent should move it self
 since therefore there are difficulties on both sides, nei-
 ther ought to be denied, because the manner is uncon-
 ceivable. [12.] But it must be observ'd; that what
 has been said about the indifference of things with
 respect to the divine will, especially takes place in the
 choices which we conceive as Primary; but not all
 ways in After-choices. for, supposing that God has
 will'd any thing, while that choice remains, he cannot
 will either the same thing, or any thing necessarily con-
 nected with it: for so he would contradict himself. that
 what I mean may be better conceiv'd, it must be con-
 sider'd, that the divine power can do infinite things;
 equal in their nature, and perfections. for instance;
 we may conceive an infinite number of men, alike in
 all things; infinite sorts also of rational beings, equally
 perfect: which of these God should create first, no
 thing could determin him, but his own will. and
 having determin'd to create man, as he is; that is,
 with the appetites, faculties, and integral parts, which
 he has: it is impossible that God should will, or choose,
 things contrary to the nature of man, while that choice
 remains. [13.] For, when we conceive any thing
 propos'd to the divine understanding to be done, we
 must necessarily suppose, that, with one view, he
 takes in all things, that are necessarily connected with
 it, and whatsoever may, to eternity, follow from it;
 and, that, with one act, he wills, or nills all those
 things. if therefore he determin'd to create man, he is
 to be suppos'd also to will, that he should consist of a
 body and soul; that he should be endow'd with senses,
 and Reason; and, that, as to his body, he should be
 subject to the general laws of matter. for it is plain
 that all these things are included in the determination
 about creating man. [14.] Nay, not only those things,
 that have a necessary connexion with the thing chosen,
 are to be esteem'd included in the first act of the will;
 but also those things which tend to conveniency and
 happiness, as far as they can consist with the good of
 the whole. for, since God is of infinite goodness, it is
 certain, that he wills the good of his creatures, no less

than their existence; that therefore, with the same choice, with which he determin'd to create things, he also will'd whatsoever is agreeable to those things, and tends to the preservation of their natures. [15.] We observ'd before, that there is in things a twofold goodness: the first, and principal, by which they please God, being conformable to his will; the second, by which they are consistent among themselves, helpful to one another, and mutually promote the good, the preservation, and perfection of the whole; and both these sorts of goodness proceed from the divine choice, and will. for, since God hath determin'd with himself to please himself, by making and preserving the world; he is therefore to be thought to have will'd all things, which make for the benefit, and perfection of his work: otherwise he would be contrary to himself; and would, himself, be the cause, by that contrariety, of disappointing his choice. for, he is supposed to have chose, that there should be a world; that it should last as long as he had determin'd; that every thing should obtain the end assign'd it; that all things should act according to the nature he gave them, and should conspire to the preservation, and perfection of the whole. it is impossible therefore, that he should will things contrary to these; or that those things should please him, that tend to the disordering, maiming, or destruction of his work. for that he should will that things should be, and yet null the means of their being, is inconceivable. [16.] Man therefore being form'd as he is, from his being made of such a nature and condition, it is plain also that God will'd that he should be pious, sober, and just. these therefore, and such like laws of nature are immutable, being conformable to the divine will; and contain'd in the first act of choice, by which he determin'd to make man: nor can God null these things, his purpose remaining that man should be as he is. for so the same thing would please, because conformable to the first choice of making man, which is conceiv'd yet to stand; and would displease, because inconsistent with another choice, in which he nulls the things that are

are contain'd in the former choice ; that is to say, he would will and nill the same thing, at the same time ; which is impossible. [17.] Nor yet is he less free, because he cannot will that man should be perjur'd, a murderer, &c. for he is no otherwise determin'd, than by his choice : nor does a thing any otherwise please, or displease him ; than because it is agreeable, or contrary to his will. for, while the divine choice remains that he should be man, that is, a creature bound to be pious, just, and sober ; it is impossible that he should will him to be perjur'd, or a murderer : nor, while the first choice remains, can the latter have place in God, being inconsistent with the former. when therefore we say, that there is goodness in things, and affirm that some actions are hateful to God, and others pleasing ; it is not, because we believe that the divine choice is determin'd by their goodness ; but because we suppose it to be contain'd in the first act of his will concerning the creating of things ; and that ¹²⁶ they please, or displease, as they are conformable, or contrary to that choice. Nor is the divine liberty destroy'd, because he must necessarily will these things, while he wills them : for, every thing, while it is, necessarily is. but this necessity is consequent, not antecedent to the determination of the divine will. the divine choice is not therefore determin'd by the goodness of things ; but goodness, and agreeableness in things, arise from choice ; and that is best to them, which agrees to the divine choice ; by which he will'd, them to be, what they are. From what I have said, I think it sufficiently appears, that God is an agent, to whom things are therefore pleasing, because chosen.

18. Yet it must be observ'd, that this power in an agent of determining its self, is not of such a nature, as supposes infinite perfection : for I have shew'd before, that it may consist with an imperfect understanding, and other appetites. it does not therefore seem peculiar to God, or incommunicable : and therefore we have no reason to doubt, but that a creature may partake of it ; and, if it had pleas'd God to communicate it, there seems to be no inconsistency in the thing,

thing, but that a creature might have been capable of it: and a creature, so endow'd, would, without doubt, be more noble than the rest; and would more perfectly represent the image of God, since God therefore has created more imperfect things, it is no absurdity to believe, that he has not omitted more perfect things. we shall therefore enquire whether any traces of this power are discoverable among the works of God.

SUBSECTION 5.

Man has a power of Pleasing himself by Choice.

1. **I**T is plain, I think, from what has been said, that there is such a principle in nature; and that it is communicable. now we are to enquire whether nature has given it to us. If we look into our own minds, a doubt may arise, whether we are always passive in our voluntary actions; that is, whether goodness, according to the degrees in which it either is, or is believ'd by us to be in things, determines our choice: or, to speak plainer, whether we always choose things, because they please us, and seem advantageous; or whether, when sometimes they seem indifferent in themselves, or hurtfull, before choice, they acquire a goodness by choice; and, on that account alone, please, because they are chosen. We have shew'd that there is such a principle in nature, as can make agreeableness, and goodness in things, by willing: whether we are possess of such a principle is the question. that we are, seems reasonable, *first*, if we are conscious to our selves of liberty; *secondly*, if we experience in our selves the signs, and properties, which we have said do accompany this principle; *thirdly*, if it be plain that the causes, which are suppos'd to determin the will, are insufficient; or that they arise from choice, but do not cause it. As to the

2. *First*, we so certainly experience, that we have such a principle of freedom; that we can scarcely, if we

we consult our own minds, doubt of it. and hence it is, that all, of all nations, following the guidance of nature, and observing the sentiments of their own minds, have asserted liberty, at least in some actions: nor has any one, except forc'd, and, as it were, circumvented by philosophic subtleties, deny'd; ¹²⁸ either that he is free, or that he can please himself by choosing this, or the other thing, out of many; tho' what is prefer'd was not, before choice, preferable to others, for any intrinsic goodness. [3.] In this therefore, as in many other things, the vulgar seem to think better, and to reason more justly than philosophers. for the vulgar generally follow the natural sentiments of their minds; and, tho' they are dull enough in deducing long reasonings; yet, in those things, that are perceiv'd immediately, by sense and experience, they are oftentimes sharper than philosophers: who, either puff'd up with vanity, that they may seem to be wiser than their neighbours; or, deceiv'd by their own subtilty, oftentimes feign monstrous conceits, and deny the most manifest things: nay, while they endeavour to trace truth through secret avenues, inaccessible to man, they often leave it behind them; and are blind in broad day. hence some have deny'd Motion, some Rest, others Space, Sensation of Brutes, God, and all Truth: and so some deny Liberty, being unable to loose the knots, they have ty'd for themselves, by their own subtilty. not so the rude, and unlearned: who, disregarding such reasonings, judge ingenuously of things, according to the dictates of their sense and experience: If we receive their opinion, it is plain we have gain'd the point. for all proclaim that they are conscious of a free principle within themselves: which yet we have shew'd cannot conveniently be explain'd otherwise than we have done it. With these agree the sentiments of our unprejudic'd minds: nor, in a matter of fact, is the common testimony of mankind to be esteem'd of little force.

4. Secondly;

4. Secondly, If we find, in our selves, the signs and properties, that belong to this power; we
 129 have no reason to doubt, but that we have the power also. now the signs and properties are, To be conscious to our selves, that we are the true cause of our actions; and That we can act and please our selves by thwarting our natural appetites, senses, and reason. If it be evident by experience, that these things are possible; it will also most certainly appear, that we have a power, that can please it self by choice alone.

5. First then, We have said before, that the cause, that has this principle, is the only true efficient cause of its actions; and to it alone can be imputed what is done by it. now all impute to themselves the actions of their own wills; and esteem them properly and truly their own, whether good, or evil: a sure sign that they are not sensible that they are determin'd by any other to choose, or exert them; otherwise they would regard, not themselves, but what determines them, as the real cause of them. from a consciousness, and firm persuasion of this truth, it is, that choices all made are more grievous than those, that proceed from unavoidable error, or ignorance. and this is the reason that a slight evil, occasion'd by our own choice, gives our minds more uneasiness, and anguish, than the greatest evil brought upon us by means of another. if we fall, by an elective act, into diseases, poverty, disgrace, our conscience accuses us; the reflection is irksome; nor can we pardon our selves, tho' secure from the fear of the wrath of God, and punishment of men; but when the same evils befall us by necessity of nature, or the agency of another, we indeed lament our condition, and complain of our fortune; but we are free from that gnawing anxiety, and those accusations of an avenging conscience, that afflict those who are miserable through their own fault. as therefore an agent, that has this principle, must necessarily blame himself, if, by his choice, he create any inconvenience to himself; so he, that blames himself, shews that he has this principle. for, as it is impossible for an agent not to blame himself, who
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believes himself the real cause of his own misery ; so, on the other hand, it is certain that he, that blames himself, reckons himself the real cause of his misery ; otherwise he would complain, and be angry with that agent, that forc'd him to do those things, which he finds attended with uneasiness ; but would never blame himself, as the fountain, and cause, unless he was conscious to himself that he could have prevented it. [6.] Conscience therefore is a plain proof of our having this active principle. for, we are not only pleas'd with our good deeds, and in pain for our bad ; but we also impute them to our selves ; and, either commend, or condemn our selves, as the authors, and real causes of them : a *certain sign* that our minds are conscious of their Liberty ; and that they could have pleas'd themselves by doing otherwise than they have done. [7.] The *second sign*, or property of this power, is, To be able to please it self by counteracting the natural appetites, senses, and reason. If we find that we can do so, we may be assur'd that we have this power. [8.] As to the natural appetites, we said before, that this principle, when it happens to be joyn'd with the natural appetites in the same person, often goes contrary to them, and pleases it self by restraining them. if we find we can do this, it is a sign that we have it. And who has not experienc'd this in himself ? who has not sometimes willingly bore things difficult, irksom, and grievous to the natural appetites ; and been pleas'd with such a suffering, as a greater good than the gratifying the appetites ? yea, even the pain, arising from the violence offer'd to the appetites, if we choose to bear it, is in a manner grateful, tho' otherwise most grievous. whence it plainly appears, that the pleasure depends upon choice : for, while the choice remains, It remains ; but when the choice is chang'd, It vanishes. now such choices are daily made : nor is any one so much a stranger to himself, as not to be conscious of them. [9.] We may further observe, that we not only embrace those things, with pleasure, which the appetites reject, and reject what they desire ; but, by an obstinate choice,

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do as it were change nature it self; and cause the appetites to follow the things, which they naturally avoid; and to avoid the things, which they naturally desire. And this has place not only in the appetites; but also in the objects of the senses. some things are to them naturally disagreeable, and deform'd; yet these things, by the force of choice, are bore; and, the natural inclinations being alter'd, at last become delicious: on the other hand; things sweet, and beautiful, are rejected by the will; and, at last, become ungrateful. These things could never be, if it was not in our power to please our selves, otherwise, than by the agreeableness of things to our appetites and senses. for, whence can it be, that things sweet, beautiful, commodious, and gratefull to the appetites, and senses, should be rejected; and, when rejected, become unpleasant, and grievous: on the other hand, how cou'd crosses, pains, torments, yea even death it self become pleasing; unless from this principle, that pleases it self by choice. if it be allow'd that we have such a principle, these things may easily be accounted for: since, by the power of this principle, things, naturally good, are turn'd into evil, and evil into good. for it has a good, superiour to these; by means of which it overcomes, and changes their nature: and, that it cannot be otherwise accounted for, we shall shew hereafter.

10. These things indeed are generally suppos'd to be done according to the prescriptions, and by ¹³² the power of reason; and that the will, under its guidance, embraces things ungratefull to the natural appetites, and senses. I confess that these choices are sometimes the result of reason, and allways ought to be. for I before hinted, that a regard should be had to these, in our choices: but very often it is much otherwise. We shew'd before that a power, capable of pleasing it self by its choice, cannot be determin'd by reason; since the understanding rather depends on it, than it on the understanding. a third property therefore, and sign of this power, is, To be able not only to thwart the appetites, and senses; but reason also. If we find that this is possible, we must

must acknowledg our selves to be posselt of this principle, but that we can, by the force of choice, overcome, not only the appetites and senses, but also the understanding, we learn by daily experience; and it is to be lamented, that, by so many instances, it may be prov'd, that we please our selves in our choice, contrary to the natural inclination of the senses and appetites, and to the dictates of reason also.

11. We have heard of Atheists, who, hardned by the obstinacy of a perverse mind, have endur'd imprisonment, torments, and death it self, rather than renounce their belov'd impiety. and we may have observ'd many, who, rather than fall short of a foolish choice, willingly run the risque of their fortunes, lives, and souls. how many have disregarded the entreaties, and advice of their dearest friends, the dictates of their own minds, dangers, tortures, death, the wrath of God, and punishments of hell? and have prefer'd to what is truly good, things, which, setting aside the goodness they have from choice, are mere trifles, of no value, and without even the appearance of good. there have been those, who, wittingly, without hope or faith, have murder'd themselves, and their nearest relations, without any signs of distraction; if we may judge of the soundness of their minds by ¹³³ their words, and actions. Now did such as these attend to reason, or follow any other good, but the enjoyment of what they chose? That this principle can do these, and more absurd things, we have shov'd before. for, since it is suppos'd to be of such a nature, that it can please it self by its act; whenever it can exert an act, it can also please it self, tho' the natural appetites, senses, and reason it self oppose. if therefore it be allow'd that we have this principle, it is easy to conceive how these things may be: otherwise it is unaccountable, how things, so absurd, so opposite to reason, so contrary to the senses, and dictates of the understanding, should be daily committed by mankind. [12.] Nay, what may seem more strange, the will seems to have so great a power over the understanding, that, subdu'd by its choice, it may not only esteem
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good, evil; but also be forc'd to admit falsities for truths. nor will any one think it impossible, who considers, that the senses are as much natural faculties, and as naturally perceive their objects, and discern things gratefull from ungratefull, as the understanding. if therefore, by sometimes choosing things contrary to the senses, we please our selves; it is also possible, sometimes, to procure pleasure, by embracing things contrary to reason. The senses are forc'd to receive, and bear things ungratefull, which by use become gratefull, and no less pleasing than those things, which are agreeable by nature. so, sometimes, the understanding may be forc'd by the will to receive false things for true; by use to believe them; and, at length, in good earnest, to enjoy them as true. hence that common expression, *We easily believe what we very much wish.* and to some it is a pleasure to overcome, not only their senses, but their reason also. I confess he is much to blame, and acts foolishly, that does it. but, from this, that we are to blame, and that we act foolishly, it appears, that we not only can, but actually do please our selves,
 134 by choosing things contrary to reason; and that the judgment of the understanding rather depends upon the will, than the will is determin'd by it. From what has been said it appears, that all the signs and properties of a power, that can please it self by its choice, belong to us: it is therefore certain, that we are possess of the power.

13. The same will appear, *Thirdly*, by considering the reasons, by which they, who think the will is passive in choosing, say we are mov'd to choose thus absurdly. for, if, while they go about to give a reason for those and the like things, they bring, as reasons, nothing but the choices themselves and their effects, it will plainly appear that they are in a mistake, and offer the effects for the causes. which will appear yet more clearly, by enumerating the reasons, by which they suppose the will to be mov'd to these things.

14. The chief of these Reasons are, the *mistakes of the understanding*, the *obstinacy of the mind*, the *prevalency*

valency of the passions, and madness. by these they account for all the unreasonable, absurd, and impious actions of mankind; and these are reckon'd the causes of all choices; which, tho' without reason, are suppos'd cannot proceed from an intrinsic goodness of the things chosen. for

15. *First*, As to the mistakes of the understanding, it is certain that we, sometimes, through mistake, choose things hurtfull; whence we are oftentimes troubled: but this we don't impute to ourselves, unless we are conscious that that mistake was voluntary, that is, that, in some measure, it ow'd its original to choice. Choice is therefore prior to every culpable mistake; for it depends upon it. we don't therefore always choose absurdities, thro' mistake; but, when we choose absurdities, we stray from truth. But if we would confess the truth, conscious of all we are about to do, we are hurried upon absurdities by choice. if therefore there be any mistake, it is no other, than that we reckon it better to enjoy a free choice, than be without natural evils. Hence it appears, that there is such a pleasure resulting from choice, as is able to deceive the understanding, and make it prefer that pleasure to every natural good, yea to life it self. but whether this be done thro' mistake, or no, it is a strong proof that we have such a principle, that pleases it self by its choice.

16. *Secondly*, As for that obstinacy, by which they think we are mov'd to choose absurdities, it is plainly nothing else than, a bad and persevering choice. nor can obstinacy and perverseness be otherwise explain'd, than by choice. If it be allow'd that things please us, because they are chosen, it is evident that Obstinacy is Adhering to a choice, and being pleas'd with it, against the dictates of reason, and with the loss of natural goods, without necessity. but if the will be determin'd from without, there will be no such thing as obstinacy; nor will any thing else be meant by an obstinate man, than that a man has long been in a noxious mistake, without any motive to change his judgment. a man, in this condition, may indeed be

said to be miserable; but not at all obstinate, according to the common meaning of the word.

17. *Thirdly*, Since neither mistakes, nor obstinacy, are sufficient to account for these choices, they have recourse to the *power of the passions*, as, a Desire of fame and glory, Anger, Hatred, &c. these they will have to be the cause of our choosing absurdly; and affirm, that choice is determin'd by these. but fame and glory have no good in themselves, especially to those, who believe that they shall Not Be after death. whence is it then that they are contented to purchase glory with their lives? from nothing sure, but from choice. by choice we have fram'd to our selves these idols; and, whatever good they have in them, they have it from choice. to be talkt of after death, to spread our fame by our deeds, are no otherwise pleasing, than because we will them. to live in obscurity, to die and be forgotten, will be no less pleasing to him, that chooses it; and have actually been pleasing to some.

they therefore, that contend that these things
136 determin choice, take the effects for the cause. for these things prove, that things, in themselves inconsiderable, do, by choice, acquire so much goodness, as to outweigh all natural goods.

18. The same we may say of *anger*, *hatred*, *love*, and *despair*, by which many are suppos'd to be driven upon absurdities. but indeed what, in them, is hurtful and grievous, they have from choice. nature has indeed given us passions, for the most part, innocent, while they are solicited by proper objects, and only in a natural season, as we may see in brutes; but, by the power of choice, they are forc'd to change natural objects; that is, anger and hatred are, by choice, forc'd, not upon those things, that are naturally hurtful; nor love or desire on those things, that are naturally desirable; but on others of a quite different kind, with which they have no natural agreeableness. such are fame, and glory after death: such also are most of the instruments of luxury; and those things which are commonly said to please only by the force of the fancy, that is, in reality, by choice. hence it is, that

that men, with so much application, and emotion, pursue things in themselves ridiculous, noxious, and absurd; and even stake life it self for trifles. it is choice, that substitutes these things to the passions, to be pursu'd by them, in the stead of natural objects: and while they are acted, not according to the exigency of nature, but the command of choice, they pervert all things; transgress the bounds of reason and interest; and, disregarding these, rage without restraint, or bounds.

19. As for *envy*, and *revenge*, they are not owing to nature, but to the will; and, without choice, are not at all, for, whatever is pretended to the contrary, that a man should undergo labors, dangers, and disasters, in evil enterprizes, yea risque his fame, family, country, and life, to satisfy his envy, or revenge, can no otherwise be accounted for, but because he has chosen to satisfy these passions: and it is plain, that the most unexperienc'd are sufficiently appriz'd of this. but these things, once receiv'd by choice, are more pleasing than what nature has made necessary: these absurd choices therefore proceed not from the force of these passions; but the absurd and irregular force of these flows from choice.

20. *Fourthly*, They, that observe these to be insufficient, refer absurd choices to *madness*, and *rage*. but this is to play with words, and take madness in another sense than is usual. he, that, disturb'd in his mind, can neither deduce conclusions, nor attend to the appearances of things, is reckon'd a mad man: but they, who do many absurd things, are not incapable of these; and have the natural use of their understanding, and senses. whence therefore is it, that they are hurried into absurdities? certainly by the force and government of a superior faculty, that is, the will: which has a good peculiar to it self, that it makes by choice, this it seeks, neglecting what reason, what the body, what circumstances, what the appetites, and natural faculties require. for, while it can provide for, and please it self, it is not at all concern'd at those things, that are hurtfull to these; but, pleas'd with its exercise,

endeavors to entreat its pleasure, by pursuing things contrary to them. for the more it makes its way through difficulties and absurdities, so much the more, conscious of its own force, it applauds it self: which seems to be what we call Vanity and Pride. hence it forces the senses, reason, and natural appetites, to serve its choices; nor can he any more be said to be mad, that, forc'd by the strength of a superior faculty, acts against reason; than he, who, impell'd by a greater force, falls from a precipice. for he, that has acted contrary to reason, must not immediately be reckon'd a mad man; but he alone, that does absurd things by reason of the faculty of understanding hurt, or the use of reason hinder'd. he, that can follow the directions of reason, and wittingly violates them, is to be esteem'd, not a mad man, but a wicked man.

21. If it be granted, that we have *this superior faculty* in us, all these things may easily be accounted for. for he, that is possess'd of it, will please himself, by pursuing his choices, even to the detriment of soul, and body; and with injury to his senses, appetites, and reason: which we, often, with amazement, see done. but, without this power, it seems impossible that we should make to our selves a good by choice; or, that we should prefer a good, so made, to every natural good.

22. I confess these things ought not to be: but, if those things could not be, that ought not to be, *there would be no sin*. as therefore there are many goods from this principle, so there is also in it this evil, that, by its power, wicked and absurd things are done; and it has this inconvenience, that it can do what it ought not.

23. From these, and other arguments, that might be brought, it sufficiently appears, I think, that God has given us such a principle; and that our will is determin'd by it self: that therefore they are mistaken, who suppose that the appetites, passions, or understanding, determin our choice. It is probable that the occasion of the mistake was from hence, that other things,
besides

besides what we choose, please, or displease; that is, things agreeable to the senses, or appetites; now, observing that we have a regard to these in our choices, and that it is not prudent to choose things contrary to these, without necessity; thinking also that the judgment of the understanding must be us'd in choosing, and having been accusom'd to this way of choosing; we came at last to think, that our wills are always determin'd by some judgment of the understanding; that, at least, it is the condition of the object, that the mind should judge, what we choose, to be good and agreeable to the appetites: when, really, the contrary is generally true; that the mind judges things good, because we will them; because we have made our selves an appetite by some antecedent choice: and, by this fictitious appetite, those things, which we have embrac'd, please as much, as what we desire by the necessity of nature.

14. Yea, perhaps, we choose things contrary to all the appetites, contrary to reason, and void of all appearance of good, *only to assert our liberty in choosing*. It is certain, that any one can do this; and he, that doth do it, experimentally proves that he is free, and can please himself by his choice; and cannot be said to be determin'd by the judgment of the understanding. For this reason is feign'd by the mind, and may equally serve every choice, as being taken from the indifference of the will: and he, that does any thing, for a reason feign'd by himself, and indifferent both ways, is to be esteem'd to have done the same, as if he had acted without any reason. It is plain therefore that we partake of this power; that we use the appetites, and senses, as *spies*; reason as *counsellor*; but that the will, as *sovereign*, creates to it self pleasure, in things, by choice.

SECTION II.

That Happiness consists in Choice.

FROM what I have already said, it is plain, that a being, endow'd with choice, is more noble

noble and perfect than a being, than is not: for, what neither acts, nor suffers, is most remote from perfection; since it is of no more service to nature, than if it was not at all; and what is merely passive is one degree more perfect. but that, which has, in it self, the principle of its own actions, since it approaches, as it were, nearer to the divine nature, and is more independent; it is also more for itself, that is, it seems made for in self, and its own good especially, and is for much the more noble and perfect. nor does it seem possible that a greater perfection should be communicated, than to enjoy such a principle: and the freer any one is, and less obnoxious to motions from without, so much the more perfect is he. God therefore multiply'd such creatures, as far as the system of his creation allow'd; and ordain'd the rest, that are passive in their operations, to serve the first.

2. Since therefore happiness is allow'd, according to the common notion, to arise from a choice of the faculties and powers, that every one has, and hence the power of determining us to actions; and of gratifying our selves thereby, is the most perfect; by which especially we are assur'd that we are, and that we have a resemblance to the divine nature: our happiness must principally be plac'd in a due use of us; nor can any thing else be absolutely pleasing to us, but what is wholly in us: it must be confess'd, that many things external, many things presented, by the senses, are pleasing to us; but, if we consider the thing thoroughly, it will appear that this happens, only because we are, induc'd by these, as by motives, to exert the act of choice; by which we receive these things, as pleasing to the natural appetites: for, though the will cannot be determin'd to choose by any thing, but it self; yet, persuasions may be us'd to determin it, so as to avoid things absurd; and ungrateful to the natural appetites.

3. For it is certain, that, in choosing, we use the assistance of the understanding, as a torch before us, to distinguish external goods from evils. But we use it as a Judge and Counsellor, not as a Lord and Dictator: and,

and, if we would confess the truth, we use it, rather to avoid things absurd and hurtfull, than to obtain things good and pleasing: for, whatsoever we choose, as before was shew'd, will therefore be good and pleasing, unless it leads us to things contrary to the appetites, or otherwise absurd: the understanding therefore discovers, and advises to avoid these external evils, or embrace good; but, till we exert the act of choice about them, neither is the one absolutely pleasing, nor the other displeasing. for, that it is so, I have prov'd before; and experience will convince any one of it, that will but attend to it. If therefore nothing pleases us, unless in some manner chosen; it is plain, that we *must seek for our happiness in choice.*

4. We have shown before, that a thinking creature, that is merely passive as to its actions, cannot be perfectly happy. for, being subject to the motions of external things, it must necessarily meet with things evil, as well as good. nor is it possible that all things should be agreeable. It remains therefore, that ¹⁴² a creature, that may be free from all pain, must have in it self the principle of its own happiness, and be able to please it self, however external things are: that is, it must have a power of its own actions, and be able to please it self by willing any thing. for, whatever such an agent meets with, it will please it; since, by it, things are not chosen, because they please; but, on the other hand, please, because they are chosen. whoever therefore has a free choice, may bless himself with happiness, by choosing whatever happens, and by fitting his choice to things.

5. And this seems to be the only way, that creatures can be perfectly happy. for, since things, necessarily bound by certain laws, cannot be chang'd; it remains that choices must be alter'd, to be conformable to things, that is, to the divine will. for, so, free agents may have it in their power to obtain happiness. hence we are so often warn'd, in Scripture, to be conform'd to God. on this depends our salvation and happiness: and not without reason. for, what is happiness? it is not to be, always, in all things, as we choose to be;

or,

or, as we would be. but he, that chooses always to conform himself to the divine will, will always be as he would be; and will never be disappointed in his choice. however external things go, a man, so dispos'd, may have happiness: nor doth it seem possible for any one, otherwise, to be happy.

6. But it may be said, that perfect happiness is not to be hop'd for: since beings, join'd to earthly matter, must necessarily be affected by its motions: nor can we, without some pain or troublesome sensation, bear the dissolution of the body, and hurting of the organs, which yet cannot be avoided. I confess indeed, that absolute happiness is not to be hop'd for in the present state: but yet, the more our choices are conform'd to things, the more happy we are. if therefore our choices were absolutely free, it would be free for us also to be absolutely happy. but, since the care of our bodies, and natural appetites, confounds our choices sometimes, and draws them aside; we cannot absolutely, and without a mixture of trouble please our selves in our choices. for, tho' they give pleasure, and greater pleasure than the natural appetites, yet they do not remove all troubles, or extinguish the sense of pain. we must therefore acquiesce, in this life, in a moderate and imperfect happiness, such as the present state of things allows: and it is plain, that that, such as it is, arises from nothing else, than our choices. for, tho' we cannot, always, by choice alone, remove the trouble and pain, that arise from the things, which, tho' ungrateful to the, natural appetites, we are forc'd to bear; yet we may choose to bear those things; and, in choosing, please our selves: the consciousness of our courage, in bearing them, overcoming the uneasiness of the pain. yea, and perhaps so much encreasing the pleasure, that the excess of it may exceed the pain, arising from the disappointment of the appetites, so many degrees, as might have been enjoy'd, had there been no contrariety between the appetites, and choice, for instance, one, that feels two degrees of pain from a disease, and, by choosing to bear it, decently and with patience, enjoys

enjoys six degrees of pleasure; the two degrees of pain being subtracted from six of pleasure, there remain four degrees of solid satisfaction. Such a one therefore is no less happy than he, that has four degrees of mere pleasure, without any mixture of pain. If this be allow'd to be possible, we may be as happy, with the the natural appetites, as if nature had given us none; nor will there be any cause to complain of them.

7. And here, by the by, we may admire the divine goodness and wisdom, which (tho' things for the most part are fixt, and necessarily bound by certain laws) could yet create an appetite, that shoud have, within it self, wherewith to satisfy it self; and; that might, by bare willing, make any state of things pleasing to it. Now a Free will doth this, by accommodating it self to things; when the things themselves cannot be alter'd. for he is no less happy that chooses what he knows will be, than he that causes to be what he has chosen, the one may always be effected; the other is oftentimes impossible. happiness therefore must be had this way, or not at all. and it is hard to conceive, how he can fall short of happiness, who has it in his power to please himself. This seems to have been *the opinion of the ancient Stoics*: tho' they did not thoroughly understand, or at least have not sufficiently explain'd their meaning. yet they plainly enough plac'd happiness in the use, and choice of those things, that are in our power: which yet could not be, if we could not please our selves by choice.

SECTION iii.

Of Undue Choices.

HENCE plainly appears what Choices are to be reckon'd *Undue*: for it is evident, 145 that we are endow'd by God with a faculty of Choosing; to please our selves by the use of it; and be blessed with the enjoyment of what we choose. for, to enjoy what we choose is a happiness; to fall short, and be disappointed; a misery. when therefore we know-

knowingly choose what we cannot enjoy, it is plain that our choice is foolish, and undue: for we bring upon our selves an unnecessary misery: since we could have chosen otherwise with equal pleasure. He therefore, that knowingly chooses what he cannot obtain, or what may cause unnecessary trouble to himself, or to another; chooses wrong. Now this is possible,

First, When any one chooses things *impossible*. it seems strange that any one should knowingly choose an impossibility: but that this has sometimes happen'd, I have shew'd before.

2. *Secondly*, When any one chooses things that are *inconsistent*. he that doth so, contrary to himself, knowingly cuts off all hope of enjoyment. when we will any thing, we must take in with the thing we choose, all things that necessarily follow it. now all things here are mixt, nor is there any thing entirely free from bitterness. we therefore often will, in a thing, what pleases our appetites, and nill the rest: but, in vain; when things pleasing cannot be separated from those that are displeasing. we must therefore either choose it entire, or reject it. he that does otherwise, cannot please himself; since he necessarily must bear what he would not. he is therefore willingly unhappy by an undue choice.

3. *Thirdly*, He may be judg'd to make an undue choice, that desires *what he knows is not in his power*. for it is a chance whether or no he can obtain what is not in his power: but it is foolish to trust our happiness to chance. since therefore it is in our power to choose those things only, which we may certainly obtain; we either hazard our happiness, or utterly ruin it, when we pursue *uncertainties*.

4. *Fourthly*, That also is an undue choice, that puts us upon taking *what is lawfully occupied by another's choice*. We have before said, it is a misery to fall short of our choice, to enjoy it, a happiness. the enjoying therefore what is chosen is Owing to every one, that has the power of choice, in as far as it is necessary to exercise the faculties of him that chooses, and hinders not the good of others. now he hinders ano-

another's good, that would make what is common his own property, nor take from what is common more than his lot: things, therefore, that are before occupied by the choice of others, are owing to them that choose them; nor can they be taken away, without injury; he, therefore, that desires them, with what is not due to him; that is, by an undue choice, endeavours to bereave others of their right. This is principally to be refer'd to those things, that are before occupied by the Divine choice; w^{ch} they are so be judg'd, by all, prohibited, and sacred; nor can he succeed, to be happy, that sets himself against God, by choosing those things, that God wills he should not choose; for, what God wills, must necessarily be; but God wills the happiness of all, as far as it is possible: he, therefore, that, without necessity, injures the happiness of another, sins against God; and makes an Undue Choice.

Fifthly, Hence we are forbid to desire any thing hurtful to our selves, or others, by hurtful things, that lead to natural evils; that are hurtful to soul, or body. From what has been said, it appears that things please us, because they are chosen: but reason dissuades from choosing things, that are hurtful to our selves, or others: or that destroy the natural appetites without necessity: or that occasion owing to these appetites, which it can be done without a greater detriment: or that are therefore opposite to those, no hindrance cause, since, if, demands not of a due enjoyment of the appetites, it is to be esteem'd Undue.

SECTION IV.

How it is possible that we should fall into Undue Choices.

IT is difficult to conceive, as has been said, how he can miss of happiness, that has it in his power to please himself: but he, that chooses the above nam'd, or such like things, must necessarily fall short

of his choice, and his appetite be disappointed; that is, he must be unhappy. But you'll say, how is it possible, that any one shou'd choose these things? I answer, this may proceed, 1, from *mistake or ignorance*; 2, from *carelessness or negligence*; 3, from *devoty*; 4, from *a contracted habit*; 5, from *other appetites* implanted in us by nature. not that the will can be determin'd by these, or any other extrinsic appetites; but because it takes hence an occasion of determining it self, which otherwise it would not have had.

2. *First*, As to the First, we before prov'd that we are liable to *mistakes* and *ignorance*; and that this must be reckon'd among natural evils. when therefore we are forc'd to choose in things not sufficiently known, our mistakes are not to be imputed to us as crimes: nor is it to be suppos'd that God will permit fatal mistakes: but a choice, in things not sufficiently known, often offers it self to us when we are oblig'd by no necessity; and then, in haste, without sufficient consideration, we choose things impossible, &c. nor are we therefore free from blame, since we are oblig'd to deliberate, and search into things before we choose.

3. *Secondly*, These undue choices therefore may arise from *carelessness*. for, by due care, the good and evil, that is in things, wou'd appear: but, by being negligent and supine, we are deceiv'd; and suffer for our negligence, by stumbling on the evil.

4. As to the *Third*, since the pleasure of a free agent consists in his choice, no wonder if, to his utmost, he indulge his will in exercising it. nor will it be strange, if, in this widely extended exercise of choice, he sometimes passes the bounds prefixt by God and nature; if, whilst he is desirous to try all things, he light on some things that have not a happy issue, that is, on things absurd, or impossible. for he pleases himself by the attempt, tho' he be unhappy in the event: but such a one is not free from blame, for every one is oblig'd to take care not to be studious to please himself by new choices, beyond what he ought; or, through

